

SS-Romans 10:1-10-05/16/21

Intro: "We are saved by faith and not by any human effort."

I PRAYING FOR THE LOST—Rom. 10:1-2

A Paul's desire (Rom. 10:1)

- a **Privileges**-Romans 9 through 11 focuses on both the **present status and the future hope of Israel**. Paul notes their special privileges (9:4-5), God's sovereign choice of them as a nation (11:5), and their ultimate destiny (vs. 25).
- b **Passion**-As Romans 10 opens, Paul's sentiments echo what he has already written: "*I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh*" (9:2-3).
- c **Plan**-More than anything else, Paul longed for and prayed to God that Israel might be saved. **While it is true that Israel was chosen by God for a special role in His plan, each Jewish person also needed faith to be saved**. For the most part, they had rejected their own Messiah and needed to repent and believe (Acts 2:36-39; 3:12-19). **While significant, their heritage was no guarantee of their salvation**. As Paul said, "*For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel*" (Rom. 9:6). The forerunner of Christ, John the Baptist, had declared this truth to those who came to listen to him preach at the Jordan (Matt. 3:7-9).
- d **Prayer**-Since each individual must exercise personal faith in Christ, **how can praying for the unsaved help?**
- **Softening**-First, **prayer may soften the hearts of the unsaved** and open them to the work of God's Spirit (Acts 16:14).
 - **Seeing**-Second, **prayer may bring about circumstances that cause a person to see his lost condition** (vss. 23-34).
 - **Speaking**-Third, **prayer will empower believers to speak God's Word with boldness** (4:31), thus enabling a clear and powerful witness to be presented to the lost.
- e **Preaching**-Paul, of course, realized that **prayer was not the only tool to reach lost Israel**. Upon entering a city, **the very first place he went was the Jewish synagogue, where he preached the gospel** (Acts 13:14; 17:2; 18:4). If his fellow Jews rejected the message, he then concentrated on reaching Gentiles. Either way, Paul tried to reach all people so that he "*might by all means save some*" (I Cor. 9:22). He nevertheless had great concern for his own people, realizing that at one time he was just as spiritually blind as them.

B Israel's zeal (Rom. 10:2)

- a **Pedigree**-As a nation, Israel not only knew about the one true God, but **they were also very zealous for Him**. When Paul was reviewing his Jewish pedigree (Phil. 3:6), **he identified his zeal in persecuting Christians as a source of pride prior to his call by Christ on the Damascus road**.
- b **Preference**-Depending on its motives, zeal can be either good or bad. As was true for most Jews, their zeal was "*not according to knowledge*" (Rom. 10:2). **They had rejected their own Saviour because they preferred to maintain their man-made traditions** such as those promoted by the Pharisees. As Paul himself testified, the **Pharisees were the strictest sect of the Jewish religion** (Acts 26:5), but they were **also among the most zealous opponents of Christ** (Mark 3:6; John 5:18).
- c **Path**-Just because people are **sincere and zealous does not mean they are right**. Suicide bombers are both sincere and zealous, but their actions are clearly evil. **Before his conversion, Paul was sincere and zealous, but he was wrong**; neither his sincerity nor his zeal made his actions right.
- d **Principles**-While **having knowledge without faith is insufficient, having correct knowledge is vitally important**. As God said to ancient Israel, "*My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee*" (Hos. 4:6).

II PURSUING RIGHTEOUSNESS—Rom. 10:3-8

A Willing ignorance (Rom. 10:3-4)

- a **Righteousness**-As mentioned previously in our study of Romans, "*righteousness*" is often used by Paul to mean a **right relationship with God**. Since **most of Israel had rejected Jesus as their Messiah**, they had not submitted themselves to God's way of righteousness through Jesus Christ. Instead, they had established their own means of attaining righteousness, which was wholly inadequate. In Scripture, righteousness is not something we achieve but something we receive through faith in Christ alone.
- b **Ritual**-Under the **Mosaic Law**, such things as **Sabbath keeping, offering sacrifices, and various rituals intended in part to point toward the need for a Messiah-Saviour**. To be sure, these were divine commands to be obeyed. The problem is that no one can obey them perfectly; therefore, no one can be saved by keeping the law. Ultimately, the law points to the One who was the perfect Sacrifice for sin, the Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 3:24; Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 10:1-4).
- c **Reason**-Christ is the "*end of the law*" (Rom. 10:4), meaning **He is the fulfillment, aim, and purpose of the law** (Matt. 5:17). The Law and the Prophets all point forward to Christ (Luke 24:27, 44; John 1:45). **For a Jew to reject Jesus and attempt to keep the law is to miss the very reason the law was given to Israel in the first place!**

B Works of the law (Rom. 10:5-6)

- a **Statutes**-Leviticus 18:5 says, "*Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them.*" Paul quotes this verse in Romans 10:5. This statement is also alluded to in Nehemiah 9:29 in a review of Hebrew history, when Ezra reminded the people in his prayer that Israel "*dealt proudly, and hearkened not unto thy commandments, but sinned against thy judgments, (which if a man do, he shall live in them;)*."
- b **Sacrifice**-As already mentioned, **if a person really could perfectly obey God's law, he could claim righteousness based on that achievement**. Only the Son of God can make such a claim, however, which allowed Him to be a **perfect sacrifice for sin** (cf. II Cor. 5:21).
- c **Stresses**-In contrast to righteousness based on the law is the **righteousness that comes by faith**. This righteousness takes a completely different approach. **Righteousness based on the law emphasized doing works on one's own, whereas righteousness by faith stresses trusting in Another for righteousness**.
- d **Salvation**-"*God's way of salvation [is] not difficult and complicated*. We do not have to go to heaven to find Christ, or into the world of the dead. He is near to us. In other words, the Gospel of Christ—the Word of faith—is available and accessible. **The sinner need not perform difficult works in order to be saved. All he has to do is trust Christ**" (Wiersbe, The Bible Exposition Commentary, Victor).

C Word of faith (Rom. 10:7-8)

- a **Repeat**-The quotation used by Paul in verses 6-8 comes from **Deuteronomy 30:11-14**. Moses knew at this point that his days were numbered. Hence, **he delivered a series of sermons to the people of Israel before they entered the Promised Land**. The name "*Deuteronomy*" literally means "*second law*," and it was to a large degree a **repetition of the Law given on Sinai**. Moses was **repeating it to the children of the previous generation**. **This generation's parents had died in the desert as punishment for their lack of faith** (cf. Num. 32:13).

- b** **Recounted**-After listing the blessings on obedience (Deut. 28:1-14) and the curses on disobedience (vss. 15-68), the people were exhorted to keep God's covenant (chap. 29). While the people might have concluded that obedience was "hidden" (30:11) from them, it was not. They would not have to go to heaven and bring it down (vs. 12), nor was it necessary for them to travel "beyond the sea" (vs. 13) to learn God's will. Rather, it was "very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it" (vs. 14).
- c** **Redemption**-Interpreting the above text in light of the gospel, Paul declares that it was not necessary for a person to have Christ come down from heaven or to bring Him up from the dead in order for them to know Him as Lord, especially since Jesus already had risen. This, as Paul says, is "the word of faith, which we preach" (Rom. 10:8) and is sufficient to bring the message of redemption to a lost world. "The word of faith which Paul preached was the historical event of the death and resurrection of Christ" (Allen, ed., Broadman Bible Commentary, Broadman).

III PROFESSING FAITH IN CHRIST—Rom. 10:9-10

- A** **Confession**-To confess Christ with the mouth might be called the Good Confession. Paul reminded Timothy that he had "professed a good profession [or confession] before many witnesses" (I Tim. 6:12). Before Pilate, Jesus Himself made the "good confession" by affirming His identity (vs. 13).
- B** **Connotation**-Unlike other confessions that may admit wrongdoing or even criminal behavior, confessing Christ is wholly positive, for in this way we publicly profess our faith in the risen Son of God. Confessing Christ as Lord and Saviour does not have the same connotation as confessing our sins, because one is a confession of hope while the other is a confession of conviction (cf. Matt. 6:6; I John 1:9).
- C** **Contrition**-That Paul does not mention repentance here should not be taken to mean that he felt it is unnecessary. As he reminded the Ephesian elders, his preaching included "repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21). Indeed, all those who come to Christ must repent and believe the gospel (Mark 1:15; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30).
- D** **Christ**-These verses in Romans also remind us of the great confession Peter made when he declared of Jesus, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16). This truth is in fact the "rock" (vs. 18) upon which Christ would build His church.
- E** **Convert**-When the Ethiopian eunuch asked, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" (Acts 8:36), Philip told him that if he believed with all his heart, he was a fit candidate for this Christian ordinance. Consequently, the eunuch declared, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (vs. 37). Upon his profession of faith, the new convert was immediately baptized and "went on his way rejoicing" (vs. 39).
- F** **Confess**-Not only must we believe in our hearts that Christ died for our sins and arose the third day, we must be willing to acknowledge this openly. That such a confession is vitally important is seen from the words of Christ to His disciples: "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32-33).
- G** **Confirm**-It should be noted that simply stating that we believe in Jesus is insufficient unless we truly trust Him as Lord and Saviour. Note also that belief in the bodily resurrection of Christ is not optional; it is essential, as it is the cornerstone of the Christian faith (cf. I Cor. 15:12-57).
- H** **Comparison**-The heart represents the inner person, where faith exists (Rom. 10:10). The mouth must express what is in the heart. Such faith leads to "righteousness," a right relationship with God. Confessing Christ leads to salvation. "The Hebrew parallelism makes confession and belief, as well as righteousness and salvation, two sides of the same coin" (Allen).
- I** **Commit**-It is possible to believe much about Jesus and remain unsaved, since we must be willing to actually commit ourselves to Christ and to depend on Him and Him alone for justification. Even during Christ's ministry, some were unwilling to fully commit to Him. John 12:42-43 says, "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."
- J** **Continue**-After confessing Christ, we must progress in holiness, or else we will remain immature, "babes in Christ" (I Cor. 3:1). If we remain such, we will likely act as did the carnal, contentious Corinthians. Paul did not doubt their salvation (1:2), but he knew their sanctification was lagging. Grace is free, but it is not cheap!
- K** **Crude**-Martyred German pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, "Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession, absolution without personal confession. Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ" (The Cost of Discipleship, MacMillan). Such grace is really no grace at all!

Conclusion: "We have to share with others the good news of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ."